



Conservation Planner Certification Course Descriptions

Overview of Water Quality Resource Assessment

Overview of Water Quality Resource Assessment is comprised of a series of one hour webinars that provide training in water quality processes and pollutants in agricultural settings. It focuses on assessment tools and approaches to address water quality resource concerns in the conservation planning process. This specific course is a review of basic water quality principles and provides an overview of the subsequent sessions focused on specific water quality topics.

This course is available in AgLearn and COVLC.

Nitrogen Management and Concerns

This course provides a foundation in nitrogen chemistry, the nitrogen cycle and transport pathways, and the effects of excessive nitrogen in the environment. The course covers common assessment approaches and tools for evaluating nitrogen risk to surface and ground water, and common practices to address excess nitrogen at a field level.

This course is available in AgLearn and COVLC.

Phosphorus Management and Concerns

This course provides a foundation in phosphorous chemistry, the phosphorous cycle and transport pathways, and the effects of excessive phosphorous in the environment. The course covers common assessment approaches and tools for evaluating phosphorous risk to surface and ground water, and common practices to address excess phosphorous at a field level.

This course is available in AgLearn and COVLC.

Sediment Management

Although sediment is a natural component of the fluvial system, excessive sediment load can have deleterious effects upon aquatic life, increase water treatment costs, reduce reservoir life expectancy, and clog navigational waterways. In addition, because many pollutants including nutrients, metals, and organic compounds adsorb onto sediment particles, contaminated sediment is a problem in many of the nation's waterways.

This course provides training in the nature of sediment in the fluvial system. It covers the causes of erosion, sediment entrainment, pest and nutrient entrainment. The course also covers a review of

assessment tools to evaluate sediment movement and common conservation practices to address excessive sediment in surface water.

This course is available in AgLearn and COVLC.

Water Bodies

This course provides training in the characteristics of streams, lakes, and aquifers encountered in agricultural settings, and in identification of healthy and impaired water bodies. It introduces participants to several water quality assessment tools and their use in the conservation planning process.

This course is available in AgLearn and COVLC.

Pest Management and Water Quality Implications

This course provides training in common pesticides and the impacts of their presence in water bodies. It provides an overview of fate and transport pathways and common practices to address pest management. The course also includes an introduction to WIN-PST.

This course is available in AgLearn and COVLC.

Water Management

This course provides basic training in various methods of water management and their implications for water quality. It includes an introduction to irrigation and tile drain management practices to best protect surface and ground water quality. The course also includes an overview of salinity problems on agricultural land and water management practices to minimize salinity problems.

This course is available in AgLearn and COVLC.

DCR Nutrient Management Soil Science, Soil Fertility and Crop Production School, currently NMP-certified in Virginia, or Nutrient Management Tract 1 Part 1 (NRCS)

The DCR NM course is taught in person by Virginia Tech professors covers soil science, soil fertility, organic nutrient sources and crop production material. Students without previous training in these subjects will find this session helpful in understanding how nutrients react and interact when applied to the soil. The session could be described as a mini-agronomy course.

This course is offered twice annually. Information and registration can be found on the DCR Nutrient Management website.

The NRCS course provides the participant with a basic understanding of the science of nutrient and pest management, as well as environmental concerns associated with the use of nutrients and pest management measures, including environmental risk, and the processes that affect the fate and transport of nutrients and pesticides in the environment.

This course is offered on AgLearn

Basic RUSLE2 (Soil Loss Calculations)

Basic introductory workshop will provide basic skills needed to calculate soil loss using the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation Version 2 (RUSLE2). RUSLE 2 estimates soil loss from sheet and rill erosion caused by rainfall on cropland, hay land, and pasture. This session will be classroom based.

In person offered by DCR.

Pesticide Management Orientation or currently certified as in any category as a Virginia pesticide applicator

Provides the participant with a basic understanding of the science of nutrient and pest management and safety precautions. DCR provided course.

USDA/NRCS AgLearn course Pest Management Track 2, Part 1 is also an equivalent course.

Virginia Water Concerns

This course will be led by the Department Of Environmental Quality to address needs related to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, Water Quality, Wetlands, overview of state requirements, and Total Maximum Daily Loads.

Perennial Stream Identification

This course provided both lecture and field components to teach on perennial stream determination methodology and associated regulations.

Classes are advertised on the VIMS website.

Virginia Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species Protection

Training will be done in person with our Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and Division of Natural Heritage partners to inform participants what partner organizations do, what the concerns for Agricultural Best Management Practices and Conservation Planning are, and how to work with each organization to process “hits” from query’s in the Conservation Application Suite.

Virginia Cultural and Historic Resources Protection

Department of Historic Resources (DHR) led in person training will inform participants of what the department does, what the concerns for Agricultural Best Management Practices and Conservation Planning are, and how to work with DHR to process “hits” from query’s in the Conservation Application Suite including VCRIS and ePIX.

Conservation Selling Skills

Two-day, workshop that combines lecture, discussion, exercises and role-play practice sessions to enable professional conservation staff to more effectively achieve the goals of their organization and satisfy the needs of those we serve.

Virginia Agriculture BMP and Cost Share Program

DCR led training will provide introduction, overview, and operation information for the Virginia Agricultural Cost Share program and VACS Manual. Training will include a review of the guidelines and policies that are key to the operation of the Best Management Practices (BMP) and Cost Share program. There will also be a review of a few of the most common BMPs across the state to instruct how to understand practice specifications and required qualifications to properly recommend, approve or deny practices, and implement effectively for Soil and Water Conservation District Participants. (This training is not the annual VACS update trainings usually held in June)

DCR Conservation Planning Program (Forms, Processes, and Module User Training)

Multi day training designed to be a culmination of all the previous training. In this training participants will get a thorough training of the Conservation Planning Module and have hands on use of the module in practice to develop a conservation plan. Participants will learn what to look for out on the land, how to document the farm operation and resource concerns with the required conservation plan forms, and develop recommendations to create the DCR Conservation Plan. This training is the last step before creating a DCR Conservation Plan for review for Planner certification.